

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2859

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 28, 2008

Title: An act relating to the regulation of massage therapy.

Brief Description: Establishing new requirements for licensing massage therapists.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Williams, Hinkle, Moeller and Green).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/14/08, 93-0.

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/27/08, 2/28/08 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Fairley, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Marr and Parlette.

Staff: Mich'l Needham (786-7442)

Background: A license is required from the Department of Health (DOH) to practice massage therapy. The practice of massage therapy means a health care service involving the external manipulation or pressure of soft tissues for therapeutic purposes. The practice is regulated under rules adopted by the Washington State Board of Massage (Board) and approved by the Secretary of the DOH. An applicant for a license must successfully complete a course of study in an approved program, successfully complete an examination, and be 18 years of age or older. Under Board rules, a massage therapist must complete 16 hours of continuing education every two years.

Summary of Bill: Renewal of a massage practitioner's license requires, in addition to other requirements, completion of continuing education requirements, as established and administered by the Board.

The Secretary of the DOH must grant an inactive credential to a massage practitioner if the practitioner submits a letter to the Board stating the intent to obtain an inactive credential and the practitioner holds an active license in good standing and does not practice massage in Washington.

An inactive credential may be reinstated if the massage practitioner meets the Board's reinstatement requirements, pays the renewal fee, and provides a written declaration that: (1)

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no action has been taken by a state or federal jurisdiction or a hospital that would restrict the practitioner's practice; (2) the practitioner has not voluntarily given up a credential to avoid sanctions; and (3) the practitioner has satisfied continuing education and competency requirements for the most recent two years.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2009.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Substitute Bill: PRO: The American Massage Therapy Association has been working on this legislation for several years. It creates an inactive credential status and it would be helpful for some of our members.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Melanie Stewart, American Massage Therapy Association-Washington Chapter.